

WASHINGTON STATE  
Office of Trade & Economic Development

October 12, 2001

Jim Lewis, Chairman  
[State Building Code Council](#)  
PO Box 48300  
Olympia, WA 98504-8300

RE: Amendments to the Washington State Energy Code

Dear Mr. Lewis:

The Office of Trade and Economic Development strongly supports the proposed energy code amendments before the Council. We appreciate that the State Building Code Council entered into rulemaking to address the Governor's request to improve the state's energy code. Our staff has participated in the meetings and discussions of the Energy Code's Technical Advisory Group. The residential amendments achieve electric and natural gas savings, increase affordability in annual housing costs, simplify the code dramatically, and increase the flexibility that homeowners, builders, and architects have in designing and building homes to meet code. The non-residential energy code amendments require Washington's code to reference federally adopted ASHRAE equipment standards, thus securing the savings due to these federal standards locally in Washington.

The benefits to Washington's citizens are substantial. While the incremental costs of these efficiency improvements range from \$430 up to \$1500, these costs are offset by the annual reduction of homeowners' energy bills. These more efficient homes result in a positive cash flow in the first year of occupancy. The improvements make buying and living in homes more affordable. The natural gas savings over the next fifteen years equal almost one-half of our annual statewide residential natural gas consumption. The electricity savings over the next fifteen years are equal to the electricity used annually by the communities of Ellensburg, Centralia, and Elmhurst combined. We believe these cumulative energy savings from newly constructed and remodeled homes are essential to our goals to secure reliable and affordable energy service in Washington.

We urge you to adopt the proposed energy code amendments into code. Please see our attached technical comments for further analysis of the code amendments.

Thank you, for your time and consideration during this rulemaking.

Sincerely,

Tony Usibelli  
Acting Assistant Director